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DECEMBER 1948 1/6

GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE



IN THIS NUMBER

*the Geography
of Christmas Cards*

GEORGE BUDAY

with 20 plates in FULL COLOUR

and other articles by

PROFESSOR E. G. R. TAYLOR
SIR STEPHEN TALLENTS
WILFRED THESIGER
CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD
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Geography and You—and Me

by PROFESSOR E. G. R. TAYLOR

Few people command the broad sweep of vision and learning that is needed for an assessment of the world's geographical problems today, in relation to their effect upon us all; and Professor Taylor is one of those few. Her present article will be followed by others designed to enable our readers to share the geographer's world-view on many matters that compete for their daily attention

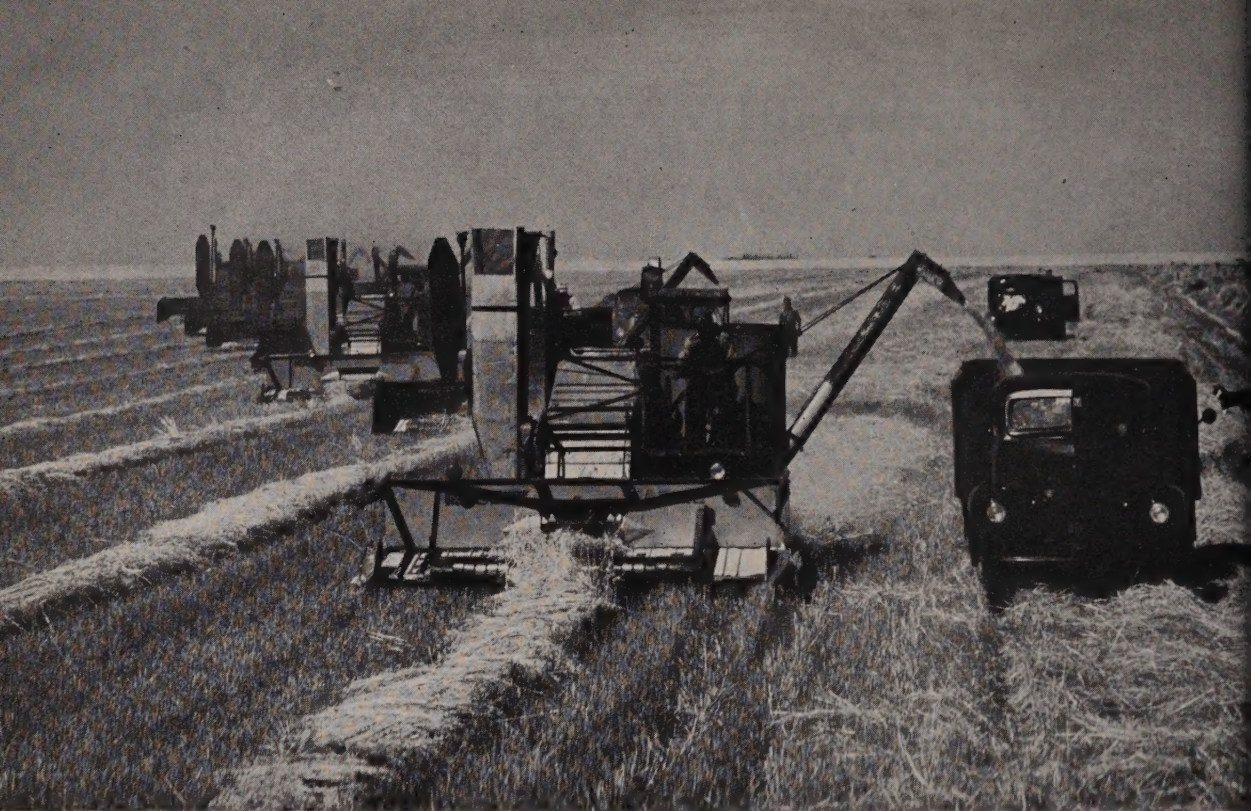
WE learned Geography when we were very young indeed. And it took the form of the 'breakfast lesson'. We listened absorbed to the tale of the dark-eyed Indian child out all day with his mother picking tea on the wet hill-sides of Assam. And the tea was for us! A little Spanish boy (we were told) had shaken down the fruit in his father's orange grove at Seville to fill our marmalade jar. The brown sugar on our 'sop' had cost a Jamaican negro hours of labour in the broiling sun. Scores of plough teams were furrowing the Canadian Prairie just to give us bread. And a rosy-skinned jolly Danish boy had run about the barn to find for us the precious Sunday egg, stopping on his way to smack the cow and tickle the pig that existed just to provide us with butter and make Father sure of his daily rasher. (A crust rubbed round the greasy dish, turn and turn about, was the children's share.) "So aren't you a lucky little boy (or girl, as the case might be)?" we were admonished.

Little wonder that we grew up, you and I, believing that by some Divine providence the whole world was our larder, hot countries and cool countries, wet countries and dry: and that the world's peoples, fair or dark, foreigners or 'colonials', were at our service to keep the larder full. But lately we have grown uneasy. Some of the breakfast-table items are often missing. "It's the War", we said. And later on, "It's the Peace. By 1952 we shall be back to normal!" But shall we? Can we, or anyone else, take food for granted? Is it common sense to suppose that the six continents, which will never get any bigger, will continue to support a population which is getting bigger at a staggering rate? A population which has trebled itself during the last hundred and fifty years, and continues to increase by geometrical progression, snow-balling up like money put to compound interest. Twenty million extra mouths since this time last year!

The little German children don't seem to have learned the 'breakfast lesson'—perhaps because mere coffee and rolls made insuffi-

cient subject matter. So the Germans did not take food for granted. Their leading geographers looked into the matter, and expressed the opinion that already the earth was 35 per cent full, and that all the really desirable parts of it were in point of fact completely full, if not overfull. So the obvious remedy was to elbow neighbours right and left and raise a cry for "Living Space". But that was the politicians' remedy, not the geographers'. Their solution was 'betterment'. Not, of course, betterment as we understand it in England, which means turning agricultural land into building land, 'developing' it, as we say. The German geographers' idea of betterment, which today is also the idea of Sir John Boyd-Orr and the United Nations Food Organization, is to turn good farm land into better farm land, useless land into agriculturally useful land, undesirable land into desirable land. If such a betterment becomes a world-wide endeavour, then there is room, on a not too extravagant estimate, for eight thousand million of us.

The word betterment in the sense of land improvement goes back to Elizabethan days, but no one—or only a few very discerning people—felt the need for the opposite word 'worsement'. Yet the worsement of agricultural land has long been a very real thing, and a very terrible thing in many parts of the world. The soil washed away, the soil blown away, the soil exhausted, the soil buried under silt and gravel swept down from the hills, the soil water-logged, the soil encrusted with salts, and so on and so on. And if it be argued that out of a total of thirty-four thousand million acres of dry land what does the worsement of tens of millions matter, the answer is that it is worsement of 'improved', i.e. cultivated land, of which roughly every two acres, or say one hectare, could provide food for one man or woman. And the 'improved' land is no more than a quarter of the total surface of the continents, some experts say less. So the slogan should be "Hasten betterment, and put a stop to worsement if you want the old-



National Film Board of Canada

(Above) A scene that is repeated each autumn over many millions of acres on the Canadian prairie. Nutrient minerals, representing the stored fertility of past ages, are drawn from the soil to build the plump grains of wheat. (Below) The wheat is milled in England; and the London bakers are shaping the flour into loaves

By courtesy of Lyons of Cadby Hall





re Post Library

(Above) It is springtime, and the English family are at table. They are eating bread made most probably from Canadian wheat, and drinking tea which they owe to the soil and air, rain and sun of Ceylon or Assam. The margarine on their bread derives from African groundnuts, or perhaps from Antarctic whale-oil. The whales built up their vast carcasses by straining out of the salt water countless myriads of tiny living things. (Right) The daily waste from human bodies goes away down the drain, along the sewers and ends up, only too often, in the sea. Then the nutrient minerals from Canada, India, Africa, are lost





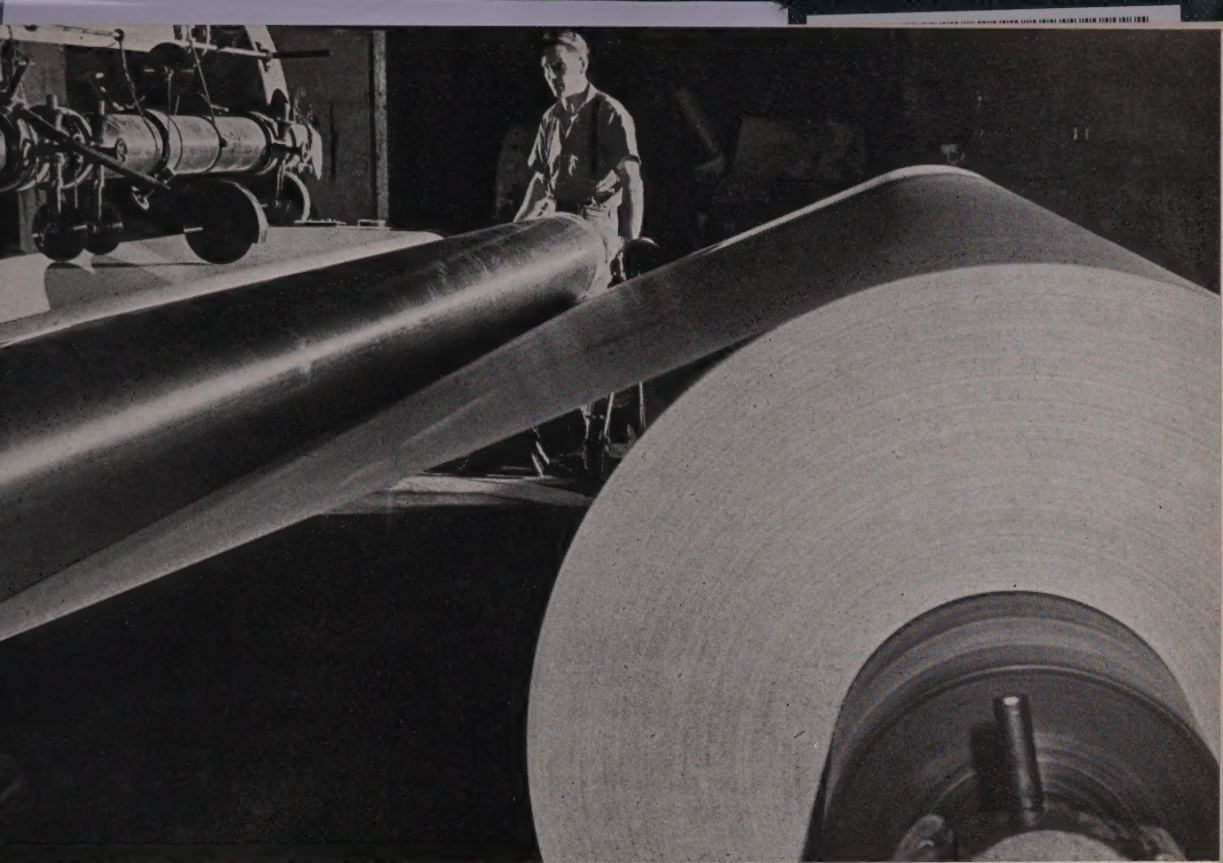
Paul Popper

(Above) In lovely Vancouver Island a logging train is making its way down the valley. The hill slopes on the right still carry their dark, close cover of spruce. Those on the left are a desolate waste of stumps.

(Below) Arriving at the paper mill, the logs are slashed into four-foot lengths and are converted into pulp

By courtesy of the Canadian International Paper Company





National Film Board of Canada

(Above) Out at the other end of the mill come the great rolls of newsprint, ready for despatch to the press.
 (Below) A single copy of the Sunday edition of the New York Times. It has 224 pages, and the whole edition consumes each week the annual product of 200 acres of Canadian forest! On Monday it is just waste paper

By courtesy of the New York Times Co., Ltd.



style breakfast-table again”.

Four out of five of the English readers of this magazine are townsmen, and not one in fifty has any direct interest in agricultural land—which not only feeds him, but dresses him all but his rayon vest and pants. But this is a case where the man who does the wrong is not the man who gets the thrashing. The farmer feeds well long after the townsman begins to starve, so that it is the townsman who, if he looks calmly on at the Rape of the Earth (for so it is termed by a soil-scientist addicted to poetry), will be the first to receive condign punishment at Nature's hands. Or, to drop the absurd metaphors with which it is customary to fog the issue, both betterment and worsement of agricultural or potential agricultural land are problems that closely concern every one of us. Town and country, industry and agriculture, are not separable, and if the breakfast-table lesson is given to-day it must tell the other half of the story, the story of the fertilizers, the machinery, the scientific and technical assistance without which the tea and sugar and marmalade, the butter and eggs and bacon, could not be produced, and which are the town-worker's contribution to his food.

What are the origins of worsement? On the physical side they are storm and wind and rain: on the human side they are poverty, ignorance and greed. Everyone has read a description of a dust-storm, many have experienced one in desert warfare. They occur in deserts and on desert margins because there there is little moisture, little humus and little vegetation to bind the soil. An abnormally strong wind whirls the loose particles up into the air and sweeps them forward perhaps for many hundreds of miles. This will occur even beyond the desert margins if with incautious ploughing we remove the protective turf. For years all may go well. But the humus is being used up, and one day there chances a conjunction of unfortunate circumstances. The ground has been ploughed and harrowed to a fine tilth, and the seed has perhaps been sown, the normal dry weather becomes a drought, and a high wind springs up. The top soil is swept away, millions of tons of it, as happened in the States of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Colorado in the 'thirties, the tragic Dust Bowl.

Is the remedy then not to plough? For wind and drought are outside control. Not completely, say the experts. Wind-breaks can be planted, and the farmer can produce by right cultivation a crumbly tilth that defies the wind. Some of the dust from the Bowl

blew right into Washington and the result was important legislation directed toward the conservation and betterment of the soil. Crops were divided into three classes, those like wheat and cotton that deplete the soil (and these are money crops, a temptation to greed), those like grasses, root vegetables and trees that conserve it, and those like leguminous crops (clovers, alfalfa) that actually enrich it, especially when ploughed back into the ground. Farmers were encouraged, but not forced, to turn more to the last two crop-groups, and experts could perhaps tell us the cost to America in lessened fertility of that bumper crop of wheat which this year is ready for shipment overseas. Eaten by Londoners it vanishes completely, for the human wastes of our great city, instead of being purified and returned to the soil, are for the most part swept as sewage out to sea. But English farmers, even before this age of scientific husbandry, had acquired the notion of Balance, so that the size of the sheep-fold and the stock-yard was in nice adjustment to the need of the arable for manure. They had and have no delusions about “inexhaustible fertility”.

Yet which of us, aware of the overwhelming luxuriance of the tropical forests and jungles, has not fallen into the error of inferring there at least a supremely fertile soil? And hence of adopting the comfortable belief that if we squander our heritage in the temperate zone we can fall back on the tropics? Nothing could be further from the truth. Their soils are intrinsically poor; it is only that the products of decay of the lush vegetation are constantly returned to them. Cut down the forest, and once the accumulated humus is exhausted the true nature of the soil becomes apparent. We should, indeed, pause as long before laying the axe to forest trees as before ploughing up the turf on an arid plain. Forests are the supreme protectors of hillsides, where they ensure that the rain soaks down slowly instead of rushing violently downhill carrying the soil and sub-soil away with it. The mischief does not end there, for the hill-foot fields are overwhelmed with coarse and sterile sand and gravel, while the rain-water, having shed its load, tears down to the streams and rivers causing them to rise in spate and to flood disastrously where their free passage is obstructed, as happened this summer across the Scottish Border.

A forest is not, like a coalfield or oilfield, necessarily a wasting asset. It can yield in perpetuity. But that is on two conditions—that we guard its health and safety, against

pests and against fire, and that we take from it only the natural yearly increase. It should be regarded as a trust fund, from which the beneficiaries, generation after generation, are entitled only to the interest. It was so regarded by the vanished hereditary landlords. To the present-day farmer, too, it would be unthinkable to eat the seed-corn or to slaughter the breeding stock. But how many set-backs must have occurred in the distant past before this lesson was learned? If it was the most momentous step towards civilization in all history when the hunter and collector of wild produce turned farmers and herdsman, it was equally momentous when he acquired the self-restraint and foresight to make use only of the annual increment of field and byre. It was only when the production of more and more food rested with himself that a man could rejoice in his wife as a fruitful vine, in his children as so many arrows filling his quiver. There is no more horrible scene than that described by Charles Darwin of the Indian father in *Tierra del Fuego* dashing his baby son to death upon the rocks because of some trifling annoyance, and of the mother submissively gathering up the bleeding body. He does not actually relate this to the few lines he had just written: "The habitable land is reduced to the stones on the beach; in search of food they are compelled to wander from spot to spot". Yet the relation was there. That food was merely shell-fish, and sea-eggs such as the little boy has accidentally dropped. Doubtless there was no such phrase as "little encumbrances" in the Fuegian language, but the idea was present in that father's mind. Our urban civilization, which has divorced hundreds of millions of us from the very notion of food production, or even food collecting, has restored to us that idea and coined the phrase. We do not dash our babes upon the stones, but the State has to coax us to rear them with grants and multiple services.

In England it was not until Queen Elizabeth's days that the townsman began to set his mark upon the rural landscape. It was, of course, round about London that the change first became apparent. The number of rich City merchants and shipowners, of rich goldsmiths and other master-craftsmen, of rich Court officials, well-to-do judges, lawyers, doctors and prosperous tradesmen, was rapidly increasing. And many of these began to build houses and acquire estates round about the capital where they could escape the dirt and noise and smells of the narrow streets. Graziers, too, and butchers bought up land and turned it into pasture where beasts could

be conditioned for the shambles. Fields were turned over to hay and oats for the growing number of horses. In fact, the old manorial estates, with their nice balance of arable, meadow, pasture and woodland, were being broken up. The timber was the first to go, for it fetched a fine price in the face of an expanding demand not only for building material but for fuel for ever more and more numerous brew-houses, bake-houses, brick-kilns and domestic fires. There came a point when, despite the housewife's resistance to the dirty and dirt-making stuff, it was necessary to burn coal instead of wood. And this brought about a fresh change. For the "fine-nosed city dames" (so a contemporary satirist tells us) began to cry out: "O Husband! we shall never be well, we nor our children, whilst we live in this city's sea-coal smoke. Pray a country house for our health, that we may get out of the stinking sea-coal smell!" What could the poor husbands do? Suburbia was born.

The worstement of England, so far as timber was concerned, has ever since proceeded apace, for were there not 'illimitable' forests overseas, and were we not a great Sea Power? Today we have only 5 per cent of our land under woods, and in a dollar-ruled world are denied even so much timber as would make a shelf for our books. But overseas the worstement was even more spectacular, once the town-bred capitalist or entrepreneur adopted the role of Lumber King. "Take only the increment": "Give back to the soil what you take from the soil"—these farmers' maxims were outside his experience. Stripped of its own soft-wood forests the United States now turns to Canada. In at one end of the mill the logs are clawed, out at the other trundle the vast rolls of newsprint, already started on their journey to New York or Chicago. Glance at some recent figures—for 1946. Over 265 million dollars the stuff is worth! But of course the worstement of New World forests is not to be laid solely at the door of the newspaper reader. Insects and fire between them take an even bigger toll, and then there is the builder and the country housewife filling her stove with billets to bring her house to a comfortable warmth. But this tale of worstement has left no room for the story of betterment: the story of the enlightened men who get 'wealth from waste', of the foresters who make their forests immortal, the story of how forty million acres of productive land are to be found for the twenty million mouths that yearly swell the cry for food, for clothes, for warmth, for houses. That story must wait.

Oil in the Jungle:

by CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD

Mr Isherwood's works of fiction and drama are well known to a wide public; less familiar, perhaps, is his book of travel in China, Journey to a War, written in conjunction with W. H. Auden. Those who have read it will be eager to renew their acquaintance with him as a traveller and observer, this time of oil-drilling operations in a remote part of the tropical jungle in Ecuador

EL ORIENTE is Ecuador's tiny share of the jungle wilderness which stretches across northern Brazil as far as the Atlantic Ocean. To the north it is bounded by Colombia, to the east and south by Peru; but these are man-made frontiers. The only natural barrier, the gigantic double ridge of the Andes, lies along the west. Down its sides flow rivers which will sooner or later join the Amazon.

Ecuador's cities and towns are all on its Andean plateau or its coastal plain. El Oriente is still uninhabited except by forest Indians and a few communities of villagers living close under the mountains. It was therefore an event of national importance when, about ten years ago, the Shell Company decided to come down into the jungle and look for oil. In 1938 the Company's geologists started a survey and in due course reported favourably. During the war years, operations could only be carried out on a small scale but they were increased as soon as circumstances permitted.

Last November we were invited to spend a few days at Shell-Mera, the Company's base-camp. The opportunity was particularly welcome because it was unique. Unless you are content with a bus-ride to the edge of the forest at Puyo, or can afford and endure the cost and hardship of real exploration, there is no other way of seeing the Oriente at all.

The 70-mile drive down from Ambato is sensational enough in itself. Outside Baños the Rio Pastaza has cut a narrow chasm hundreds of feet deep. Numerous travellers have fallen into it and a few have been rescued, it is said, through the direct intervention of the local Virgin. Crudely realistic paintings on the walls of the church record these miracles. I like particularly the story of a tired old priest who came safely over the abyss one night when the bridge was broken, asleep on his mule, across a terrifyingly slender log.

Farther on the tropical gorge widens and deepens until even a 200-foot waterfall, bursting over a wall of lava, seems dwarfed by the immense precipices which are covered with ferns and wild orchids. Landslides are frequent here. Nearly every week the road has

to be cleared or remade. You pass one place where a peasant's hut and half his mountain farm slid clear down into the river. He has obstinately built again, right on the brink of the disaster.

Shell-Mera camp lies on the bank of the Pastaza, at the opening of the plain. This is high ground still, more than 3000 feet above sea-level; the days are only pleasantly warm and the nights are cool. The camp is a big orderly place with its power-plant and hangars, workshops, storerooms and offices. The bunkhouses are cleaner and more comfortable than most hotels. The food in the mess-hall is excellent. The bungalows of the married men have a positively suburban air. There is a night-school for illiterate workers. There are movie-shows and boxing-rings and handball-courts. There is a bar run by the Company's pilots inside a dismantled Budd plane, where you can hear genuine R.A.F. slang. This is a complete industrial town, busy and domestic, with a slight but not aggressive military atmosphere. Only a few years ago the site was swampy virgin jungle.

You have to stand in the middle of the airstrip to regain a sense of your surroundings. Looking one way you see the mountains piled up against the sky. On clear days Altar is visible, an enormous broken crater, dazzling white. Before it blew its top off in an eruption it may possibly have been the highest peak in the world. More to the south Sangay sometimes appears. This is an active volcano, continually belching smoke and glowing lava. It is expected to become even more violent in the near future.

Turning around you face toward the forest. This way the view is much more limited; it ends with the first trees. Nevertheless, it is toward the forest that Shell-Mera's inhabitants are most apt to look; for in that direction the planes must fly to the outlying oil-camps, and the weather of the Oriente is treacherous, constantly changing. Great storms build up with extraordinary rapidity. Within half an hour a wall of fog can roll in and close the field. Somewhere over the area it is nearly always raining. The



(Above) An oil-rig at one of the four field-camps established amid Ecuador's tropical jungle, El Oriente. Communication between these camps and their base at Shell-Mera (right) has now to be maintained entirely by aeroplane: but if oil is found in sufficient quantities, the wilderness will undergo a rapid transformation and a new era will open for the whole country



All photographs by William Caskey from Magnum Photos Inc.



With his rifle this young Jibaro Indian has killed three members of a hostile tribe which murdered his father; he waits at Taisha for an 'airlift' to escape their revenge

Company's radio stations are in communication all day long exchanging reports.

The four field-camps now in operation are fanned out north-east to south-east at varying distances from the base. Tiputini, the farthest, is 206 miles away on the Napo, a river wide enough to permit the landing of Grumman amphibians. Arajuno, the nearest, is only 31 miles—twenty minutes by air, or four days' hard journey on foot! Even mules cannot be used on these forest trails.

Shell-Mera was built by trucking men and machinery over the mountains. That seems labour enough. But the field-camps in their utter isolation are entirely dependent on the aeroplane. No sooner had the first gang of workers trekked out to the proposed site than the pilots began their endless series of trips back and forth. Until an airstrip had been cleared there was no place for them to land. They dropped food, tools, materials, medical supplies and even livestock by parachute. Mr Humphries, the superintendent, showed us movies shot in those not-so-distant pioneer days of pigs and sheep sailing down through the

air, their orange umbrellas spread open above them against a blue sky. The animals seem to have taken these jumps very calmly. Within a few moments of alighting the sheep had already started to graze.

Taisha and Ayuy, the two other camps, lie comparatively close together 70 and 53 miles from Shell-Mera respectively. Early one morning we set out to visit them. I must admit that I was slightly nervous. I had flown 8000 miles this year already including an Atlantic crossing, but this was different. The revolver stuck in the pilot's belt ("just in case of any difficulty"), the paper to be signed renouncing all claims on the Company for damages ("a mere formality"), the bare, well-worn, interior of the aircraft piled high with crates of canned food, barrels of gasoline and flour-sacks on which we sat; all these combined to create an atmosphere of dangerous adventure. Our companions realized this no doubt although to them the trip must have been about as thrilling as a city bus-ride—for they did their tactful best to reassure us. Up to the present there has never been a fatal accident on these routes; only a few minor mishaps before the airstrips had been properly levelled and drained. Suppose the weather turned nasty? We carried enough gasoline to fly to Ambato, or even Quito. Suppose an engine failed? Our Dakota transport could get home easily on one. Suppose, just for the sake of argument, that both engines . . . ? Well . . . successful crash-landings *have* been made under similar conditions. There were emergency-rations on board. And, anyway, that was one chance in a million.

As we roared into the air and the river and the toy huts of Shell-Mera tilted away beneath our turning wing we got our first extensive view of the Oriente. The foreground was broken country—valleys fleeced with mist, ridges so steep that the trails must skirt them—all crowded and richly carpeted by the tall slim-stemmed jungle vegetation without the smallest patch of earth anywhere in sight. Beyond, the ocean of forest spread smoothly to the horizon, a green unbroken ring. And beyond that, three thousand miles of trees. It was a beautiful day, with big bright clouds in the sky. But away in the

distance, over what looked like a tiny area, a veil of rain was falling.

About half-way to Taisha you see a little airstrip which is used by the missionaries. Some time before our visit two of them had made a forced landing amongst the tree-tops. The smallness and lightness of their plane probably saved their lives. One missionary twisted his knee. The other, who was unhurt, set off to find help and managed to reach Shell-Mera in eight days. He went straight to the doctor's office. "Is the Doctor in?" he asked the nurse who opened the door. "No. I'm afraid he isn't." "Oh. I see. Thank you." The nurse looked him over more closely and became aware of his torn clothes and bleeding limbs. "I say!" she gasped, "Have you been in the jungle?" "Yes," answered the missionary mildly. "I have." He was put to bed and a search-party organized. On the eleventh day the other missionary was found, alive. This story is told at Shell-Mera with a touch of sardonic professional amusement. "They trusted God so much that they thought they didn't have to bother cleaning their spark-plugs."

Within three-quarters of an hour we were circling over Taisha. From the air the field looks like a neat rectangular piece cut out of a very thick rug. The camp is named after a local Jibaro Indian chief; and Taisha himself was one of the first people we met after landing. He was a little smiling man in a striped athletic shirt and pants, with long hair reaching to his shoulders. Jibaro families live in one big hut divided into sections. A chief's importance is measured by the number of his wives.

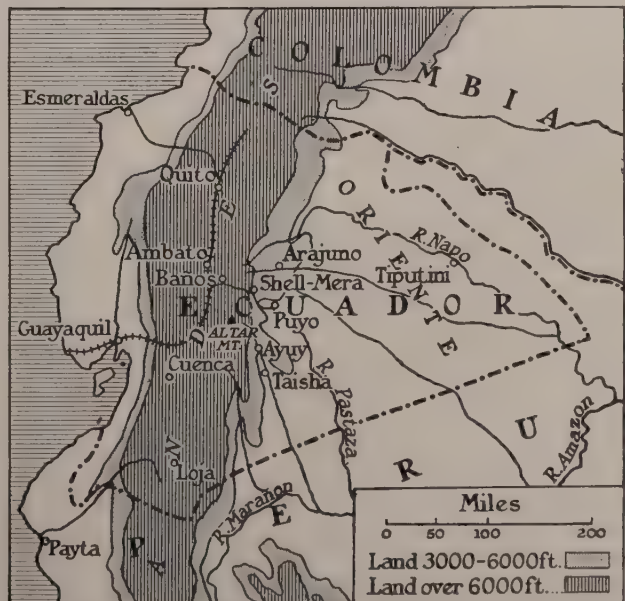
The Jibaros are one of those tribes of head-hunters about whom so much has been written by sensational journalists. And it is quite true that they still cut off and shrink their enemies' heads by a special process to the size of a small apple. You can see and buy these heads in Quito—though many of them are fakes—and, strangely enough, they are not in the least repulsive. The hair on them stands up soft and furry like a cat's; the moustache and eyelashes are almost their natural length. Their facial expression shows no pain or contortion. The eyelids are closed.

But the Jibaros, like the Yumbos on the River Napo, are quite friendly to the white man. Taisha has always co-operated with the

Shell Company, and some of his relatives helped to build the airstrip. Only the Aucas, who keep themselves hidden in the jungle, remain relentlessly hostile. Sometimes, it is said, you find a row of their spears driven into the earth across a trail; this is a warning which you had better heed and turn back. While the camp-ground was being cleared at Arajuno three men were speared to death. In all, fifteen men have been killed by Indians since operations started.

The site of the actual well is called Canaime. It lies about seven miles distant from Taisha Camp. We drove out there in a jeep, along a winding, rocky road which had been literally smashed through the jungle. On either side of it the trees were broken and piled upon each other as if a tornado had passed that way. In contrast to the freshness of Shell-Mera the place was like a steam-bath; the humidity is around ninety. The foliage was dripping wet. Sand-flies and mosquitoes started work on us at once; our necks and wrists were soon spotted with large itching lumps which tended later to fester and did not disappear for a week.

The tall derrick stands in a hollow amidst its drilling and pumping machinery. Here the noise is terrific. Although I have lived for years in Los Angeles I had never visited an oil-well before; you have to travel, as they say, to see what's in your own back-yard. Somewhat dazed by the din I tried to listen to shouted technical explanations. They were about to put another "single", or section, on



A. J. Thornton

to the "drill string"—the revolving steel pipe which does the drilling—which was then about 700 feet long. This was a mere beginning as wells are often drilled to depths of some thousands of feet. Meanwhile a boy with a hosepipe was manufacturing mud from the reddish earth of the hillside. This mud is continuously pumped down to the bottom of the well-hole and circulates back up to the surface, bringing with it the cuttings from the drilling bit. When it reaches the surface it runs down a trough where it is examined for traces of oil.

We ate lunch with some of the drillers and engineers—Ecuadorians, two Dutchmen and an American from Oklahoma—in the mess-hut of their little wooden village. Everything was clean, cheerful and efficient and as comfortable as could possibly be expected under the circumstances. Nevertheless, there was something oppressive and even sinister about this place, even by daylight. All around the clearing, the dark, living tangle of the forest stood like a prison wall; its obscure vegetable consciousness unfriendly to man and his works. Left to itself for a few months it would begin to throttle the road, to close in upon the huts, to coil up the derrick, to creep among the engines. In five years Cangaime would have vanished as a ship is swallowed by the sea. . . . But such thoughts are the luxury of the casual visitor who will be safe back in Shell-Mera by supper-time. The men who have to live here cannot indulge them. They wisely stick to their job, to tall stories of their last visit to Quito and to jokes about the girls they met.

When we returned to Taisha, there was a group of Jibaro Indians waiting on the airstrip. One of them carried a rifle. He looked very young and innocent. He spoke Spanish in a soft, modest voice, keeping his eyes averted from our faces. He had been in Quito and Guayaquil he told us, but preferred to live in the jungle; his home was near Ayuy. Just now he was returning there, after an act of vengeance. Members of a hostile tribe had murdered his father, so he had killed three of them. No, he hadn't taken their heads. Where had this happened, we asked. The boy made a slight, vague gesture toward the trees. "Eight days from here." Nevertheless, he feared that his enemies might have followed him. It would be dangerous to continue the journey on foot; he wanted to be allowed to fly. Our plane, when it arrived, was too full to take him; but he seemed quite content to wait. I hope he got back safely.

A few miles from Shell-Mera is the village of Puyo. It stands at the edge of the jungle, on the banks of a river; a charming place, which is rapidly growing into an important holiday resort. Already a school is being built, a hospital is planned and one of the ubiquitous Central European refugees has opened a restaurant where, it is said, you can eat the best chocolate cake in Ecuador. The Shell Company has had a good deal of influence on Puyo's development. Many of its employees live there and at the neighbouring village of Mera, which is also transforming itself with the aid of the Company's technical advice, equipment and transportation facilities. The ladies of the camp are actively behind the drive to finance Puyo's hospital.

And this brings me to the great general question of Shell's role in the Oriente. It is a question in the most literal sense of the word; and the answer to it must be delayed at least until late next year. At the moment of writing, two wells are being drilled; one at Oglan near Arajuno and the other at Tiputini. Both the Cangaime well and the Macuma, near Ayuy, have been suspended. So far not one drop of oil has been found at any of these places. The experts are very hopeful, of course. Already, they can produce cores of oil-soaked sand to support their opinion. Undoubtedly, there *is* oil in the jungle; but is it present in sufficient quantities to warrant further investment, including the construction of a 300-mile pipeline over the Andes to the sea?

If the answer is Yes, the settlement and industrialization of the Oriente can only be a matter of time. Towns will grow around the wells, roads will connect them, great areas of the jungle will be cleared for agriculture, the forest Indians will be absorbed into the population and Ecuador will gain hundreds of square miles of economically valuable territory. The political and social aspects of this expansion may not all be beneficial; but they will certainly mark a new epoch in the country's history.

If the answer is No, then this whole vast operation—which has already cost so much human skill and physical effort, so much courage and endurance, such quantities of money and material and machines—will have to be written off as a failure, like a disastrous military campaign. Shell, no doubt, will survive its losses and make them good elsewhere. Ecuador will find other means, sooner or later, of developing the Oriente. But, temporarily at least, the jungle will have triumphed.

The Geography of Christmas Cards

by GEORGE BUDAY, A.R.E.

Long domiciled in England, Mr Buday, who is Hungarian, has made a special study of Christmas Cards and here shows that, while their origins and relationships extend far, they were first made in this country. His present article is the forerunner of a fully illustrated treatise on the subject, based on his own and other collections, to be published by the Pilot Press in 1949

A RECENT delightful fourth leading article in *The Times*, entitled "Christmas Cards", stated that "Among the many odd things about the Christmas card is the fact that the phrase does not occur in the index of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*". Another leading article published in the same columns on December 25th, 1883, under the same title and written in the same spirit of appreciation, began as follows:

The spirit of good fellowship which the Christmas festivities engender among every class may fairly be taken as one of the best results of this ever popular and welcome season. It may, of course, be true to a certain extent that the universal practice of wishing one another the compliments of the season is followed in many cases out of mere conventional necessity, but, on the other hand, there can be no doubt that this wholesome custom has been more frequently the happy means of ending strifes, cementing broken friendships and strengthening family and neighbourly ties in all conditions of life. In this respect the Christmas card undoubtedly fulfils a high end, for cheap postage has constituted it almost exclusively the modern method of conveying Christmas wishes and the increasing popularity of the custom every year is for this reason, if for no other, a matter for congratulation.

But in spite of many such pleasant notices in existing or long since obsolete periodicals, a more comprehensive modern survey of the century-old romance of the Christmas card was yet to be attempted when I began a few years ago to write a book on this, to me, fascinating subject. My book will not be on the market for some months to come. It is therefore a great pleasure to be able to present the readers of *The Geographical Magazine* with a few notes on the history as well as the 'geography' of Christmas cards for this Christmas.

It is generally thought that since "Christmas comes but once a year" etc., and since Christmas cards are themselves ephemeral

and insignificant trifles, their span of life is necessarily a brief one, confined to that short period of conspicuous display from their arrival just before Christmas to Twelfth Night when, according to tradition, all such festive decorations are cleared away, and that the oblivion into which they then fall is deserved and should be complete. They are considered worthy of little further interest, far less of a detailed inquiry.

Fortunately this attitude of the present generation does not in any way resemble that of their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents towards the Christmas cards of their day. While Christmas cards in the shop-windows were frequently reviewed in the press of the later decades of the last century, not only were the cards arrayed on the family mantelpiece examined, discussed, enjoyed or criticized by all the family and the guests, but the favourite cards were far from being allowed to fall into oblivion once the season was over. On the contrary, their treasured existence and appraised charm continued to be cherished for years, often decades, after the critical first Twelfth Night in their career. They were stuck with much loving care into precious albums and scrap-books, often given as Christmas presents for this purpose to good little girls and boys. Victorian children were taught to fill the pages year by year with their favourite cards and scraps and mottoes from Christmas crackers, often noting under each the year and "from Mamma, Papa, Auntie" and so on. Luckily many of these albums still survive to bear witness to the love and care with which they were compiled and preserved and to afford evidence, from the well-thumbed, dog-eared pages conserving the fingerprints of many generations, that (no doubt on special occasions or on very wet days) they were brought out and enjoyed over and over again.

When one turns the pages of an album of old Christmas cards one experiences sensa-



All illustrations, except one, from the author's collection

An ironical Italian engraving by Mitelli to greet the New Year 1703 shows a Utopian paradise where rivers flow with milk and honey, trees produce clothes and finery, tables load themselves with delicacies, carriages move without horses. Only the man attempting to work is imprisoned!

tions not unlike those felt by the alert observer on an eventful journey. The mental journey provided by thousands of such cards takes us, however, not merely to places near and far, to the unexpected discovery of hidden beauties, charming people and unfamiliar ways of life. The route opened up for us offers a little of all these experiences to the sympathetic traveller, with the addition of the subtle pleasure induced by the entry into another dimension, namely, that of time. Besides an objective documentation of the habits, customs and costumes pictured on them, popular Christmas cards of the past also disclose many unconscious attitudes and predilections, without wishing to do so and thus, perhaps, with less distortion.

It is a pity therefore that the institution of the Christmas card is not older than it is. Actually it could not be. One can claim many forerunners for the Christmas card, but

its "fullness of time" could not have come before the middle of the 19th century, when its establishment can clearly be explained in what are essentially geographical terms, as the product of a particular environment. Victorian England provided the economic and social, the technical and psychological conditions for the invention of Christmas cards and the development of their formidable industry.

I do not suggest that the early Christmas card manufacturers were in any way aware of, or anticipated, the tremendous volume of trade and production which was to follow their first tentative efforts to put this new feature on the market. On the contrary, it was merely a sideline or by-product of their established trade in playing cards, notepaper and envelopes, linen labels, colour-prints for needle-boxes or valentines. When they experienced a positive reaction and a growing

This ingenious New Year greeting for 1812 engraved by Johann Andreas Boerner (1785 - 1862) clearly illustrates the transition between the personal visit and the card sent to pay the compliments of the season. It shows Boerner at the gates of a big mansion, possibly his own home. The corner of his cloak is caught in the closed door, which hinders him from proceeding. The text explains that he is prevented from calling in person to pay the compliments of the season: he is sending the print instead. (Below) An 18th-century illustrated visiting card and a so-called "Wedgwood card" of 1786 with a white frieze of cherubs embossed on a blue ground



*Ich bin gehindert und kann nicht selbst kommen,
Aber mein Compliment und recht wohl aufzunehmen!*

*Am 1^{ten} Januar,
1812.*

J. A. Boerner





The first real Christmas card, designed by J. C. Horsley, R.A., in 1843 at the suggestion of his friend, Henry (later Sir Henry) Cole, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, by courtesy of whose granddaughter this copy, inscribed by the artist, is here reproduced for the first time

demand for their new enterprise, the manufacturers were quick to follow up their chances. But it seems clear that they considered Christmas cards as merely a temporary vogue and so concentrated on a quick turnover while the craze lasted. This explains the fact that some of the earliest publishers suddenly went out of the Christmas card business and handed the market over to their competitors without apparent reason after a few years and while their sales were still increasing. No records had been kept and no sample books, if indeed there were any, preserved. On the other hand, the sample books and relevant documents of Edwardian and more recent and still flourishing publishers were mostly destroyed during the last war.

Thus the research into the history and geography of Christmas cards amounts to a kind of "rescue work". In my attempt to rescue the fading colours and vanishing sentiments, especially of the Victorian Christmas card, I have been fortunate to find many kind helpers who, by the loan of their collections and individual cards, greatly con-

tributed to the work. The most interesting of these collections (including mine) was undoubtedly the eighteen huge albums of H.M. Queen Mary's favourite cards. Her Majesty's collection, which she was gracious enough to lend me, consists of more than 1500 Christmas cards selected by herself from the cards sent to her from 1872 to the present day. This number exceeds the number of Christmas cards in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum collections added together.

There are a number of artists whose names have been brought forward to claim the distinction of having designed the first Christmas card. Without going into the very interesting and somewhat controversial details, I think it can now be safely said that the first Christmas card in our meaning of the term was designed by J. C. Horsley, R.A. It was commissioned by Sir Henry Cole and was executed by the artist for Christmas, 1843—not, as was previously assumed, in 1846 or '47. Cole was a very interesting character of the Victorian era, an energetic reformer, educationalist and



Wintry scenes, village churches, holly and mistletoe and that feathered favourite of Christmas-tide, the Robin Redbreast, are treated in the spirit of popular art on these delightfully 'dated' chromolithographic Christmas cards of the 1860s and '70s. (Right) One page from a charmingly naïve Christmas card made up of various scraps and cut-outs stuck into a home-made folder of four pages, with a very Victorian couple under a gigantic bunch of mistletoe



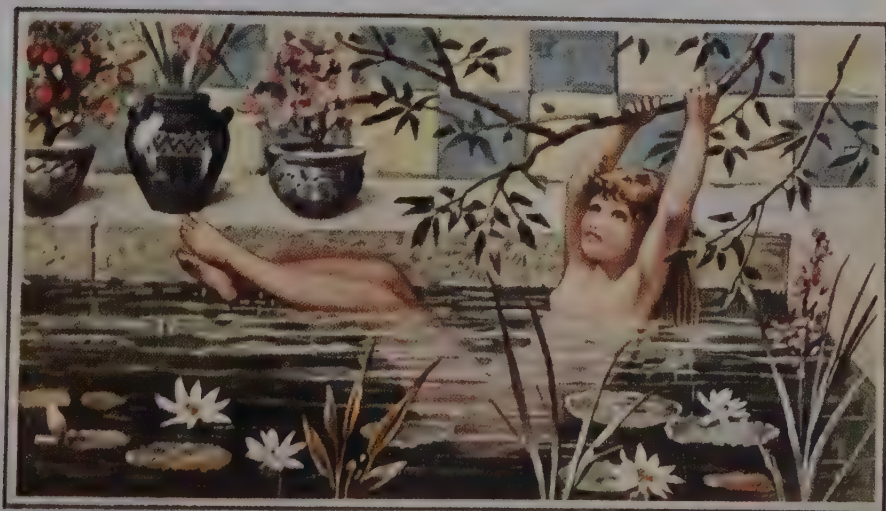


The inner contradictions of the economic and social system left some marks on Victorian Christmas cards. A characteristic aura was drawn around the 'simple pleasures' of the 'deserving poor' and sentimental representations of their hard-working and much-exploited children were considered very suitable for the occasion



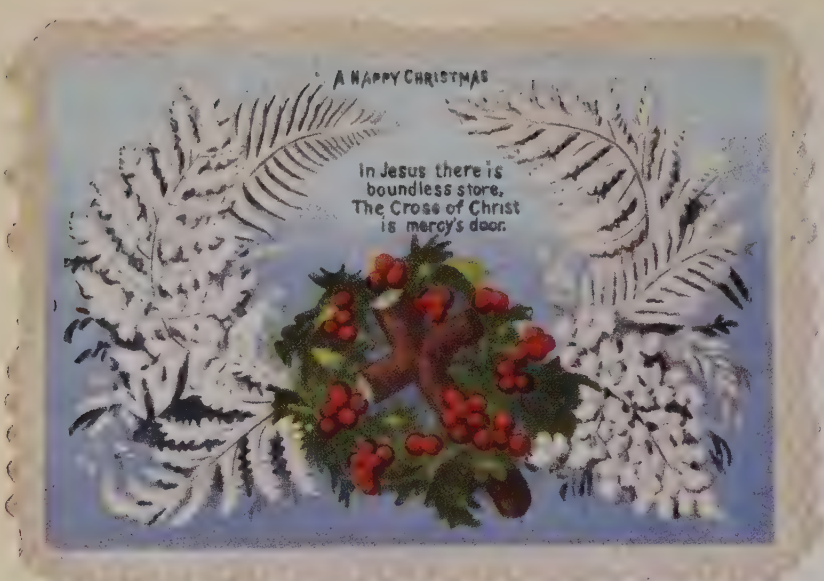
THIRD COMMANDMENT
 Thou shalt not take the name of the
 Lord thy God in vain:
 for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.





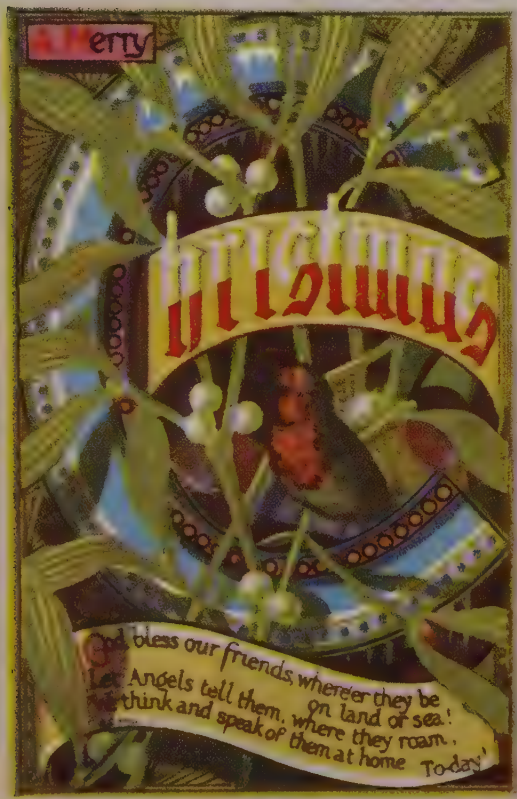
MAY CHRISTMAS GLADDEN THEE AND ALL THOU LOVEST!

Kate Greenaway's deliciously overdressed damosels carried the same penetrating period flavour as W. S. Coleman's equally favoured, but carefully undressed little girls. With their somewhat artificial innocence, both were immensely popular in the 1870s and '80s



Both mistletoe and holly first appeared on English Christmas cards as early as the 1840s, while the later and extremely frequent use of all spring and summer flowers was well in keeping with the age-old tradition which began amid dark December's—

—snow and sleet to anticipate the approaching end of winter and to announce, with gay and lively colours, the forthcoming revival of Nature





Birds and animals of every kind were popular subjects of Christmas cards in the 1870s and have been ever since. The Robin Redbreast was always an unquestioned favourite; but love-birds, cats and dogs, horses and cows, donkeys, rabbits—

—rats and mice and various insects, and even such rather incongruous subjects as the corpses of birds, have also enjoyed a periodical vogue on Christmas cards





(Above) *Birds and flowers in Japanese style on a fashionable late-Victorian Christmas card, the design of which reflects closely that of (below) a genuine Japanese colour-print by the great artist Hokusai*



Modern continental Christmas cards make full use of the still living folk arts and traditions of the various European countries. (Right) The Christmas card of Professor Ortutay, Hungarian Minister of Education. It was designed by Gitta Mallász whose work happily combines modern decorative technique with the traditions of popular art in her own country. (Below) A modern American Christmas card designed in the French manner and made attractive by the perfection of its colour-printing





Russian, Czechoslovak, Dutch and Polish folklore motives are featured on these Christmas cards, while France is represented by a design portraying Notre Dame

ardent improver of public taste. His name was closely associated with the great exhibitions, the foundation of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the introduction of perforated postage stamps, postcards and the penny post. His pioneer work provoked much bitter contemporary criticism and it is characteristic that the, to modern eyes, certainly quite innocent subject of the Cole-Horsley Christmas card (page 296) did not escape adverse comment on account of its supposedly dissipating influence by "encouraging drunkenness"!

But the Cole-Horsley card had a long procession of forerunners while at the same time it was itself the forerunner of the millions of different designs which followed it, especially from the 1860s onwards, in an ever-increasing number and variety. Among its ancestry one may enlist the inscribed New Year tokens of the ancient Egyptians, found in the tombs of the Pharaohs, and the Roman *strenae*, which at the time of the Emperors consisted of a coin usually carrying the double head of Janus, after whom the first month of the year is named.

The history of actual printed cards bearing good wishes for the New Year takes us back to the early years of European engraving and printing. One of the first of these, dating from 1466, is a delightful line-engraving of Jesus as a little boy stepping forward on the calix of a decorative flower, by the famous 15th-century artist known as "Master E.S." Most European countries contributed some surviving examples to the long list of the forerunners of the modern Christmas card. The various "quodlibets", 18th-century illustrated visiting cards, scraps, toy theatres, the "penny plain and twopenny coloured", the reward cards, pin-pricked papers, silhouettes, Baxter prints, music covers and valentines, illustrated notepaper headings and Christmas letter-heads—all these contributed to the process of achieving the final shape of the Christmas card as we now know it.

Mention should also be made of the influence of the Japanese art of the *surimono*, the traditional Japanese greeting card. This delightful and exquisitely finished Japanese art is itself the result of a slow development of printing during the long centuries which preceded it. When in the second half of the 19th century Japanese art became fashionable, indeed to some extent a craze in Europe, the *surimono* had a definite influence on the Christmas card. Most if not all British Christmas card publishers produced at least one or two sets of cards with a Japanese

setting or flavour amongst their novelties every year. The card reproduced on page 302 can pleasantly be compared with, and contrasted to, the original Japanese conception of a similar subject by the great Hokusai (b. 1760). It must however be stated that Hokusai's design was not made for a greeting card.

As it happened, when in the late 1850s and early '60s the large-scale production of Victorian Christmas cards began, thanks to the introduction of cheap postage and to the fact that cheaper methods of colour reproduction such as chromolithography had been perfected, most of the new cards resembled more the various forerunners of the Christmas card than its first real example, the Cole-Horsley card, and its immediate successor designed by W. M. Egley. Among the early designers were "Luke Limner" (John Leighton), C. H. Bennett and later on such artists as Kate Greenaway, W. S. Coleman, Walter Crane, A. Havers, Tasker Nugent, W. J. Muckley, and a number of well-known Academicians and Royal Etchers. In return the idea and the "Christmas card habit" spread from Britain to many European countries as well as other continents. Local subjects, national characteristics and indigenous artistic traditions only increased the variety and multiplicity of modern Christmas cards.

To have been preceded by a long list of forerunners in various parts of the globe and to have had an increasing number of successors throughout the world is the way in which human inventions and institutions usually secure a lasting place for themselves in history—be they of life-and-death importance or mere habits and trifles. The Christmas card cannot claim to be more than the latter, just a little messenger of pleasantness and goodwill to man, but by fulfilling this small part and carrying its message to almost every home in the civilized world, it has assumed a significance far greater than its originators could foresee. It has become a mirror of popular taste and feeling, whether high or low, and as a sociological document it is certainly more accurate than the achievements of contemporary high art, which is sometimes decades in advance of or behind the actual needs and perception of the people. Through its development the Christmas card has become in terms of our modern industrial civilization and mass production the nearest approach to 'popular art', analogous in changed circumstances to the folk-art of early capitalism and to the earlier peasant culture of the villages.

The Man Who Named Australia

by COMMANDER W. E. MAY, R.N.

His life was unhappy and, from the worldly standpoint, a failure: yet he has left a memorial in every atlas and on every ship that carries a magnetic compass. Such was Captain Matthew Flinders, whose achievements and mis-adventures are recalled in the following article. (Right) A portrait of Flinders from the Naval Chronicle, 1814, engraved after a miniature now in the Mitchell Collection in Australia



THERE can be few people in this country who have never heard of the three great explorers, Cook, Bligh and Franklin, yet the name of Flinders is almost unknown. Captain Cook is remembered for his three voyages to the Pacific and for his murder at the Sandwich Islands at the height of his fame. Captain Bligh is remembered for his part in the unfortunate mutiny of the *Bounty*; Captain Franklin for his loss with two ships while searching for the North-West Passage around Canada. Yet Flinders, who deserved recognition both for his explorations and for his work on the errors of the magnetic compass, is almost forgotten. It was Flinders' misfortune that, after an early life in which he made and seized his opportunities, all ended in frustration and an early death at forty.

Matthew Flinders was born in Lincolnshire in the year 1774, five years before the death of Cook. His father was a country doctor and hoped that his son would follow him but, at a very early age, Matthew became obsessed with the riddle of Australia and Australia remained his obsession for the rest of his life. At this time little was known of that continent. The western coast had been visited by the Dutch, on their way to the East Indies, and named New Holland. Cook had examined much of the east coast and named it New South Wales. Various navigators had touched at the south-west corner and had visited Tasmania, which was still thought to be part of New South Wales. Apart from these sections the coasts were unknown and it was even thought probable that New Holland and New South Wales were two large islands separated by a great channel running from north to south.

Dr Flinders did all he could to dissuade his son from his ambitions but an uncle in the Navy advised the boy to apply himself to the study of navigation and soon he was teaching mathematics to his schoolmaster! At fifteen he had made such progress that he had thoroughly mastered the contents of the works of Robertson and Hamilton Moore, two noted writers on the art of navigation, and was introduced by a relative to Captain Pasley of the *Bellerophon*.

Pasley was most impressed with the keenness and knowledge of the lad and first got him entered into the Navy and later appointed a midshipman in his own ship. But Pasley's interest did not end there. Captain William Bligh had just returned after the famous mutiny and was to make a second attempt to transport the breadfruit tree from Tahiti to the West Indies. In the *Bounty* Bligh had had no other commissioned officer on whom to rely. In the *Providence* he was to have three lieutenants, and a file of marines to assist in maintaining discipline. Matthew Flinders, to his great joy, was to be midshipman in charge of the chronometers, or time-keepers as they were then called.

The voyage was smoothly and successfully accomplished. Bligh took to young Flinders and taught him much, remaining his lifelong friend. On their return the midshipman was recalled to the *Bellerophon* and was present at the battle of the Glorious First of June, when Howe took or sank seven French battleships; and then home to leave at last. It was during this leave that he renewed his acquaintance with Ann Chappell, the friend of his sisters, and became engaged to her. Poor Ann. Her father had been drowned at sea and she must

have known what to expect as a sailor's wife but she can hardly have foreseen the tragedy that her life was to be.

But now there was little time for love. Admiral Pasley, as he had become, soon sent for Flinders again. The *Reliance* was to sail for New South Wales on a five-year commission, taking out Captain Hunter as governor of the convict settlement at Port Jackson, and Flinders was to go in her as senior midshipman. It is some indication of the esteem in which Flinders was already held by Pasley and even by the Admiralty that he, a midshipman still, was able to nominate his friend George Bass to be doctor of the *Reliance* and also to take with him his younger brother Samuel.

And so the *Reliance* sailed away and for five years Flinders was very busy. Voyages to the Cape for cattle and to Norfolk Island were interspersed with surveying expeditions. Whenever Flinders and Dr Bass could get away they were hard at it, sometimes together, sometimes separately, in exploring the country and its coasts. One of their earliest voyages was in an eight-foot skiff called the

Tom Thumb. Together they found the first coal to be discovered in Australia. Alone, in a whale-boat, Bass proved that Tasmania was a separate island. Flinders, following, surveyed the strait and gave it the name of his friend.

At last the *Reliance* was ordered home but news came that Sir Joseph Banks, the great scientist who was the "power behind the throne" in all matters of exploration, hoped to send Mungo Park of Niger fame to explore Australia and wished Flinders, a lieutenant now, to accompany him. Flinders, true to the ruling passion of his life, put off his dreams of marriage and agreed to remain but then, at the last moment, no one would pay Mungo Park's salary and Flinders caught the *Reliance* home after all.

Back in England Flinders found himself something of a celebrity. He was very definitely a protégé of Sir Joseph Banks and Sir Joseph had persuaded the Admiralty to send a ship to explore the coasts of Australia. Flinders was offered the command and leapt at the chance. Earlier navigators had been explorers of large tracts, filling in only the



courtesy of the National Maritime Museum

From a contemporary painting by Thomas Luny (1759-1837)

Flinders learnt his surveying as a midshipman in H.M.S. Providence, supposedly here shown in tow of native canoes, under the renowned Captain Bligh during the latter's second 'breadfruit' voyage



A Dutch map by Jansson, c. 1652. When Holland entered the spice trade in the 17th century her ships, rounding the Cape and making for Batavia across the Indian Ocean, sighted the south-west coast of Australia; and in 1606 a Dutch ship from Java discovered the eastern shore of the Gulf of Carpentaria, believed to be an extension of New Guinea. Tasman and other adventurers made further discoveries, but not until Cook had explored the eastern coast (1770) and Flinders had filled in the remaining gaps (1802) was Australia's continuous outline established

broad outlines and stopping only to survey an island here, a port there. Flinders was to circumnavigate the whole Australian continent twice and was determined that where he had been there should never be need of another survey. A brig was found for him, renamed the *Investigator*, and fitted out exactly as he and Sir Joseph wished. There was no lack of volunteers for a crew. Samuel was to be his second lieutenant and John Franklin, the future polar explorer, one of his midshipmen. Then the French provided him with a passport giving him immunity from any act of war on their part. Flinders made a decision. He would marry Ann, take her out in the ship and leave her with friends in Port Jackson while he prosecuted the survey. In April 1801 he got six days' leave, dashed home, married Ann next day and returned to London in triumph.

In those days it was not unusual to carry women to sea in His Majesty's ships but Flinders seems to have had some doubt as to how his arrangements would be received in high places so he did not publish the news of his marriage. Ann was installed on board and he hoped to get away to sea before any inconvenient questions were asked.

Then the luck changed. Earl St Vincent, that strict disciplinarian and most austere of Admirals, was passing in a boat with Lord Spencer and Mr Yorke as the *Investigator* rode

at anchor off Sheerness, and decided to inspect the ship. No one saw them board her. Of all naval crimes one of the worst, there was no officer walking the quarterdeck. St Vincent stalked into the captain's cabin and found that officer with a lady in his arms. Explanation that she was Mrs Flinders did nothing to warm the chilly atmosphere. She was evidently thoroughly at home. She had not even the grace to be wearing her bonnet!

The ship went round to Spithead and Flinders was sent for and told that he must choose between Ann and his command. If she left the country, even in another ship, he would be relieved. On the way round from Sheerness the *Investigator* had grounded where the chart showed sixteen fathoms. She had got off undamaged but, as a good surveyor should, Flinders had reported the existence of the shoal. He was told that the presence of his wife on board had doubtless led to an easing up of care and discipline. Such a man could only make one choice. Ann went ashore and on July 19, 1801, the *Investigator* sailed without her.

Flinders started his survey at the south-west corner of Australia and worked round the coast in an anti-clockwise direction. He discovered the Great Australian Bight and proved that New Holland and New South Wales were all one enormous island. He discovered Port Philip, where Melbourne stands

today, only to find that he had been forestalled by a few weeks in his discovery. He met a rival French expedition and gave it every assistance. He explored the Gulf of Carpentaria and finally, when he reached Arnhem Land, in the north, and had filled in the gaps in the main coastline of the continent which had been left by other explorers, had to give up for the time being.

For long he had struggled against difficulties. He had had to leave his astronomer at the Cape of Good Hope, a martyr to seasickness. Samuel Flinders, his brother, was a broken reed who had not the meticulous conscientious spirit of the born surveyor. Three times the chronometers had been allowed to run down and Samuel put the blame elsewhere. True to the naval tradition that no ship must be used for surveying duties until she is old, the *Investigator* was falling to pieces. Provisions were running short and Flinders himself and many of the crew were ailing. He had to run for Timor and, finding no sustenance there, staggered back to Port Jackson.

At Port Jackson Governor King, the senior naval officer on the station, had the *Investigator* examined and condemned her as unseaworthy and past repair. No other ship was available in Australia to carry on the survey and King proposed to send the crew to England in the *Porpoise* to get another. Misfortune followed misfortune. The *Porpoise* was wrecked on a reef off the coast and, after seeing his men safely landed, Flinders had to make a boat voyage back to Port Jackson for help. An East Indian man could take the castaways to China and there they might find a ship for England, but this roundabout route would take many months. Flinders decided to send the main body that way and to try to get to England himself direct with his precious charts in the *Cumberland*, a tiny schooner of twenty-nine tons. England and France were at peace and Flinders had no hesitation in putting into the French Ile de France (Mauritius) for water. In any case, had he not his precious French safe-conduct?

Here everything went wrong. War had broken out again. Asked on landing if he knew M. Flandare, Flinders failed to

recognize his own name and the French, thinking he was trying to hide his identity, became suspicious. His passport was brushed aside on the grounds that he had not come in the ship mentioned therein and in any case he had invalidated it by carrying despatches, though he explained that this had been done under the impression that the two countries were at peace. The one chance of putting things right was missed by Flinders. The Governor's wife became interested in his story and persuaded her husband to ask him to dinner. Flinders refused on the grounds that it was inconsistent with his honour to accept an invitation from one who had illegally detained him. Governor De Caen was furious. He would keep Flinders while he asked for instructions from France. It was four years before the reply came with an order from Napoleon for the release of the unfortunate Matthew.

Flinders blundered again. When arrangements for his departure were almost complete he was so unwise as to criticise De Caen in a letter, and this letter fell into the Governor's hands. De Caen, again roused to fury, kept him for another three years.

Through all his seven years in the Ile de France Flinders had the mortification of seeing other English officer-prisoners come and go. They were prisoners of war. They could be exchanged, but he was not a prisoner of war. He was merely detained, detained until



A. J. Thornton

De Caen should relent. After the first few weeks Flinders was released from prison, as the doctors feared for his health, and thereafter was allowed to live freely in the interior of the country. With the sole exception of the Governor, the French treated him with the greatest courtesy and friendliness. At last, after seven years of alternating hope and despair, the Governor suddenly relented and let him go, but first he must sign his parole not to serve against the French for the rest of the war. Reaching England in the autumn of 1810, after an absence of over nine years, he found everything changed. True, a few friends like Bligh were still the same, but to the Admiralty and to his former patron Sir Joseph Banks he was worse than forgotten and was looked upon as a failure. His old crew had arrived safely in England long ago. The major part of his discoveries had been published by the French. Worst of all his *Investigator*, although condemned, had been sailed home round the Horn by another and had reached England before she fell to pieces.

Useless for him to protest that his ship had been surveyed as unfit for sea by his senior officer; there was a feeling that if another could bring her home he might have finished his survey in her.

Gone were all the dreams which had sustained him throughout his captivity of taking out another ship to finish the job, or even of being made Governor of New South Wales. Sir Joseph would no longer press the Admiralty to send him on a surveying expedition and his parole prevented his service in a ship of war. All that remained for him was to go on half-pay and to write the account of his voyage and prepare his charts for publication, but here again he was in difficulties. The writing of the book necessitated his living in London and this was so much more expensive than the country that he and his unfortunate wife had to live in the cheapest and most dilapidated of lodgings. He had been promoted to captain on his return but, contrary to custom, his promotion had not been dated back to the beginning of his imprisonment.

William Westall (1781-1850), who accompanied Flinders in the Investigator voyage, painted this view of Port Jackson (where Sydney now stands) in 1804, when the settlement was sixteen years old

From an engraving in Flinders' "Voyage to Terra Australis", after W. Westall





From an engraving in Flinders' "*Voyage to Terra Australis*", after W. Westall

"Kangaroo Island" was discovered by Flinders in March 1802 and thanks to the "extraordinary tameness of the Kangaroos" his men killed thirty-one in one day, which afforded "a delightful regale"

He had not technically been a prisoner of war and was told that the usual rules did not apply to his case. Consequently, there was no nice lump sum of back pay to help him. Instead, he was advanced £200 to be recovered from the sales of his book and he was worried lest it should not bring in so much. Today, as much as £50 may be asked for a copy.

Matters were not improved by the ill-health of both husband and wife but together they struggled on for four years and then, the book published, Matthew Flinders died on the thirteenth anniversary of that day in 1801 when he had landed his bride and sailed away in the *Investigator*. Ann was left alone once more with only a baby daughter to keep her company and nearly forty years of widowhood to mourn her Matthew.

As I remarked earlier, Flinders has two claims to remembrance. If he is almost forgotten in his own country, his surveys are recalled by a number of place-names in

Australia, the continent he named. For Australia is his name for the smallest continent, derived from the *Terra Australis* of the earliest explorers. Even here was frustration, for he was forbidden to use the name Australia in the title of his book and had to call it *A Voyage to Terra Australis*. It was, however, not many years before the name Australia became universally adopted.

Flinders was the first man to make a scientific enquiry into the errors of the magnetic compass caused by the ironwork in a ship. He even suggested correcting it by placing a bar of iron before or abaft the compass. It was soon found that this bar was insufficient and that other correctors were also required, but this was due to changing conditions and takes nothing from Flinders' credit. The Flinders Bar, as it is called in most countries, is almost universally used and as long as magnetic compasses are used by mariners will remain his monument in nearly every ship which sails the sea.

Sands of the Empty Quarter

by WILFRED THESIGER, D.S.O.

The President of the Royal Geographical Society has described Mr Thesiger's crossing of the Empty Quarter as "perhaps the hardest piece of travelling that any member of this Society has undertaken to date". This Magazine's Trust Fund has contributed a substantial sum in aid of his journeys



The author, shouldering a covered rifle, with Ghazala, the camel on which he crossed Arabia's Empty Quarter in 1947-48. On its saddle, of the Omani type, the rider kneels behind the hump



The Empty Quarter is the great desert of Southern Arabia which extends from the Yemen mountains to the mountains of Oman and from the Hadhramaut to the Persian Gulf. Even today it is dreaded by settled Arabs and the Bedu of the North as a half-mythical land of emptiness and death. Bertram Thomas crossed it in 1930 and Philby in 1931 but large areas, especially in the east and the west, still retained the challenge of the unknown. Much of this desert has been twenty-five years and more without a drop of rain; and in the waterholes, which are sometimes 400 miles apart, the water is always brackish and foul-tasting. Mountainous dunes rise up hundreds of feet above ice-coloured salt-flats; the dunes themselves are all of an extraordinary richness and depth of colour



The four young Ruashid tribesmen who accompanied the author on his 1500-mile journey. The crossing of the drought-stricken western wastes (where lack of grazing for the camels was the greatest problem) involved a waterless trek of 400 miles; it was sixteen days before the first well was reached near the Wadi Dawasir



The highest dunes in the Empty Quarter rise from 400 to 700 feet above the desert floor. The sands vary considerably in their colouring, the total effect being that of a glowing carpet woven with threads of red, gold and silver. These mountainous dunes appear to shift very little



The parallel dune-chains stretch east and west across the desert for countless miles, generally having a firm, easy slope on one side and a steep wall on the other, the latter always being by far the paler in colour. Ascending these hills proved exhausting to the famished camels



Bedu tribesmen accustomed to the sands of the Empty Quarter have an instinctive sense of direction among them, and carefully avoid the gravel plains and stony ground which might lame their camels. The utter lack of vegetation encountered throughout most of the journey is apparent here



Much skill is needed in finding the easiest route up the dunes, for tired, hungry camels faced by too sheer a climb will collapse. Among the steeper dunes travellers dismount; as the sands are bitterly cold at night and early morning, painful cracks often appear on their bare feet



Amidst the sand-dunes loads are constantly slipping and the Bedu try to stop and adjust them where the camels can snatch a few mouthfuls of the abal bushes' juicy, thirst-quenching stems. No food is ever carried for the camels, which can go for over two weeks with very little grazing



A water-hole in the northern Empty Quarter. The sands tend to drift into most of these wells (which are seldom deep), so that they have to be dug out afresh each time they are used. Where, owing to adjacent pasturage, a well is in fairly frequent use, the Bedu often line it with bushes



A seventeen-year-old Ruashid. He had only once been out of the Empty Quarter and had never seen a motor-car or an aeroplane before; yet he flew alone from Salala to Mukalla to join the author for his journey. The Bedu's harsh life early develops initiative and self-reliance; every youth and man wears a curved dagger, and in these parts it is not worn solely for ornamental purposes: all are adept in its use

We Planned Ourselves

by SIR STEPHEN TALLENTS, K.C.M.G., C.B.

Sir Stephen Tallents has had a very varied career as an administrator and has applied his inventive mind to many problems. His latest invention is the firm of Cockade Ltd., in which designers and craftsmen under his chairmanship produce a wide range of exhibitions, displays and models

FOUR years ago I was spending my days at work in the adolescent Ministry of Town and Country Planning and my nights in an ancient village of Kent. From the Ministry I watched handsome, sometimes grandiose schemes being prepared for the remodelling of great English cities and their surroundings. At home I found little groups of my neighbours discussing the future of our village and wondering what could be done to meet if only its most urgent needs. I appealed to expert town-planning friends for a model to guide my village in the plotting of its future; but, though they discovered for me two or three interesting village studies of pre-war days, I could find nothing that seemed to meet our post-war requirements.

I therefore suggested to the Ministry that a study in village planning methods would be timely, and asked whether this could be undertaken officially or, failing that, if I might have official approval for a free-lance venture. The Ministry shied at the job but encouraged me to pursue the idea elsewhere. At the time, I regretted the decision, for I thought that the Ministry was neglecting a good opportunity of helping many rural communities; but I got busy outside Whitehall. After some rebuffs I was lucky enough to interest the enlightened Leverhulme Trustees. In August 1945 they made a grant of £500 to enable Mr Cecil Stewart, now Head of the Department of Architecture at the Manchester School of Art, then a lecturer at the Architectural Association, to carry out the project. Looking back, I no longer regret that it was pursued without benefit of Ministries.

I was fortunate also both in the choice of Mr Stewart and in his selection of a village for his experiment. Chiefly for reasons of practical convenience, partly as a compliment to the birth-place of the idea, he chose for that purpose our village of Sutton-at-Hone. Now we make no claim for Sutton as a beauty-spot. "To the visitor", Mr. Stewart was to write, "it appears somewhat dull and monotonous." But inherited beauty was not what he sought in the village of his choice. We do claim, on the other hand, that ours

is a community which has shown a commendable toughness in retaining the genuine characteristics of a village in spite of its nearness to London. We also regard its members as fortunate in having varied opportunities of employment—in farming, market-gardening and watercress-growing; in two or three local industries and outside our own borders.

The first point upon which Mr Stewart insisted was that country planning today is a job for a team rather than an individual. A committee, I hear, has been considering what qualifications a planner of town and country needs. They must have been hard put to it to schedule all the forms of knowledge and the qualities—from geography to economics; from history and an eye for landscape to plain human sympathy—which the complete planner should command. There are indeed today no more laymen in this field. All of us, as Mr Stewart recognized, have something to contribute to its cultivation. Basing his choice on Patrick Geddes's famous division of the ground into Place, Folk and Work, he picked for his key unit a geographer, a sociologist and an economist. Later on a traffic expert, a landscape gardener and an engineer joined them. So did we, the villagers of Sutton-at-Hone.

His first studies were of the geographical setting of the village; and the symbols of the geographer pervaded his task. He illustrated many aspects of our village life—taking different areas, it is worth noting, for different purposes and so introducing the regional background—in a series of ingeniously devised maps, and thus incidentally paid a handsome compliment to the virtues of the map as a conveyor of many besides topographical facts. One example of this series is reproduced here. The other thirteen ranged from Location (showing Sutton in relation to London and Southampton on the west and the Coast of France to the south) and Growth and Change (bringing out the growth of the village over the last century) to Land Utilization (in the 1930s and in 1946) and Road Traffic Density. Much of the material embodied in these maps was assembled from



hu Topham

Mediæval Sutton-at-Hone: (above) the church; (below) St John's Jerusalem, incorporating a 13th-century chapel

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(Right) *Leading members of the community listen attentively while Mr Cecil Stewart, during his first meeting with the villagers, sets forth his plans for the survey of Sutton-at-Hone and invites them to active participation in it*



Daily Herald



Daily Herald

(Left) *Informal group-discussions follow the meeting; Mr Stewart is seen chatting with three well-known residents of Sutton-at-Hone: Mr Hurford; Mr "Jimmy" Lane, baker and a prominent singer in the church choir; Mr McDonald, bootmaker and leatherseller*

existing outside sources; the Transport map, for example, from facts supplied by the Ministry of Transport and the London Passenger Transport Board.

The sympathy and help of the various local authorities concerned—our Parish and Rural District Councils in particular—were sought at the outset and readily given. Then we, the villagers, had to be wooed into partnership. The first approach was a meeting, baited with tea and buns, in our then shabby, since renovated, Village Hall, to which every household among us was invited to send a representative. It was a winter night outside, and a certain chill pervaded the earlier stages of the meeting, though it was enlivened later not only by the tinkle of teacups but also by the flashlights of a couple of press photographers. Of our population of some 900, there were about 50 present at the start and about 100 before the meeting ended.

That demure gathering was followed by a bolder move. A fortnight later our bus stops were picketed by pairs of well-coached students, who tactfully elicited from each of some 450 prospective travellers the purpose

and destination of his journey. (One man only was reticent about his purpose, not his destination.) The results of this census were to startle us. They demonstrated that we spent £4000 a year in escaping by 'bus from our village—for shopping, for work, or just for fun.

Then the schoolchildren, as the real beneficiaries of any scheme that might be devised for the betterment of Sutton, were enlisted. Mr Stewart addressed them one morning, and offered them prizes for an essay on "My Plan for my Village". They all wanted, Mr Stewart reports, a playing field; and a typical demand was for "a park near our house and a picture palace near by . . . and a little fish and chip shop further down the road". Later he held a parliament of 70 of the older children in the Village Hall. Every hand, it is good to record, was raised in favour of Sutton remaining a village. All but one wanted to go on living in the country. Of 33 boys, 21 favoured farming as a career.

By these gradual steps the investigation advanced to its final penetration of our privacies in the social survey. So small a com-



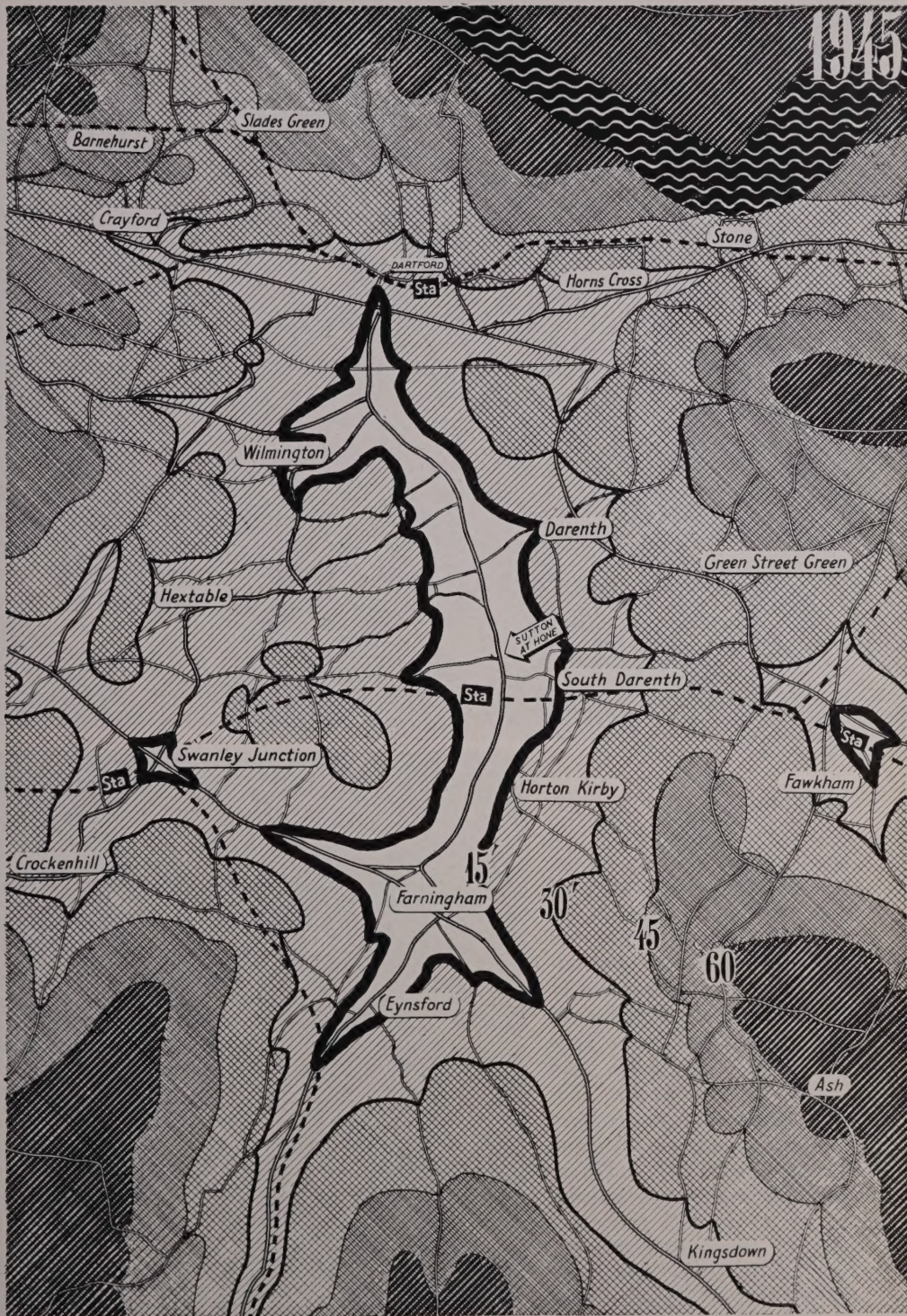
John Topham



John Topham

The tranquil life of Sutton-at-Hone was pleasantly disturbed in the summer of 1946 by a survey team of university students. (Left) One of them questions intending 'bus passengers as to their destination and purpose. Before this more detailed stage of the survey began, however, much information of value was collated in a series of ingenious maps dealing with such fundamental questions as Growth and Change, Land Utilization, Places of Work and (opposite) Accessibility. This particular map, based on transport statistics, is designed to show how long it takes to go from Sutton-at-Hone to neighbouring areas

1945



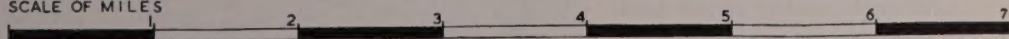
KEY

UNDER 15 MINUTES 15-30 MINUTES 30-45 MINUTES 45-60 MINUTES OVER 60 MINUTES
 FROM SUTTON AT HONE

RAILWAYS

ROADS

SCALE OF MILES





From "The Village Surveyed" (Edward Arnold)

SUTTON-AT-HONE, 1946

The village today is strung out for about a mile along (1) the main road over an area stretching from a group of bungalows which link it with the neighbouring village of Hawley in the north to the railway station in the south—both of them just outside the boundaries of this model. The only buildings of importance off the 'beaten track' are (2) the Parish Church, with its fine 14th-century tower, which is often missed by visitors; (3) St John's Jerusalem, the author's home, with a chapel built for the Knights Hospitallers; and (4) a group of council houses, whose inhabitants suffer from a slight sense of geographical and social isolation

SUTTON-AT-HONE, 1966

As a result of their survey the planners were able to suggest how the chief requirements of local inhabitants might be introduced without altering in too radical a manner the village's character. Expansion of housing at (5) was planned away from the main road and so as to link up the council houses with the rest of the community. The major recommendations included reservation of sites for (6) a new Primary School; (7) a Village Hall; (8) a village green equipped for use by both young and old; (9) permanent allotments; (10) school playing fields; and (11) a 'Modern' School and surrounding grounds. The new area of development west of the main road (which is to be a dual carriageway) will be well provided with supplementary service roads



From "The Village Surveyed" (Edward Arnold)



John Topham

Plans for the future affect above all the children of today; and so their interest and aid were enlisted both in making suggestions for changes and in appraising designs for the Sutton of 1966

munity, Mr Stewart and his team felt, was no material for Gallup polls or mass observations. Let every villager speak for himself. So they drew up with pains and skill a questionnaire, armed three young girl graduates with copies of it, and unleashed them to visit us, home by home. I will not dwell here on the rich store of information which that survey elicited. But for the credit of my neighbours and the encouragement of other villagers I will say that no one resented what I had myself feared might be regarded as an inquisition. Our three young visitors were welcomed wherever they went and were frequently also entertained to tea. Their pilgrimage from door to door—and often back again to the same door by request to meet the breadwinner on his return from work—added a novel and an agreeable strand to the pattern of our summer.

So the great plan for Sutton came to leaf and flower. It respected Sir Patrick Abercrombie's finding that our stretch of the River Darent had been "miraculously preserved" and should never be violated. It gave us a few new houses, chiefly to meet present wants, and replaced our outworn terraces by homes

which would turn their backs on the high road and look out on to a village green, playing fields and allotments. It provided a new school, a new Village Hall and a site, agreed with the education authorities, for a proposed new 'Modern' School. It provided, too, for the wise and early planting of trees to make a comely setting for our remodelled village. It was the subject of a final meeting and a two-day exhibition in our Village Hall, with all eyes on a model, made by students of the Kingston Art School, of the Sutton-at-Hone of the future.

Two questions may well be asked about our Sutton survey. The first is: Was the survey of value to Sutton-at-Hone? The second is: How far are the methods employed applicable to other villages?

Mr Stewart, on the basis of his survey, provided us with an admirable plan for the future of our village. Even the most loyal citizen of the Sutton of today would agree, I am sure, that his Sutton of the future would be a much better place to live in. Here, as elsewhere, there is likely to be a long wait before any substantial progress can be made

with the reconstruction proposed. Some might think it a waste of time to make a plan till there was an early prospect of its being carried out. This surely is a fallacy. The one bright feature of present-day frustrations is that they allow time to think and plan carefully; and every village would be wise to take advantage of that reprieve. The making of a plan on the partnership system, which Mr Stewart followed, helps to stretch the imagination of a village; and that, with villages as with men, is a valuable exercise. The possession of a plan provides the community with an instrument of vigilance—a yardstick against which to measure proposed minor changes. It yields, too, a store of suggestions when some opportunity for local improvement—in the form, it may be, of a memorial—appears.

Less directly, the survey made our village more interesting to us. No resident in Sutton could read the published report of it without finding there facts about his home place and the fields round it which he did not know before. A stranger had painted a portrait of our village and, just as a portrait of a man will bring out traits in him to which his own family are blind, so this portrait of our village brought out for us new qualities in our community.

Now for the second question. Can other villages hope to enlist for their replanning equivalent resources in money and personnel?

The Leverhulme grant of £500 had to bear the cost of trials and errors inseparable from a first experimental approach—a charge from which future surveys should be free. But even the sum of £500 is not a large premium for a community of nearly 1000 to pay for an insurance policy against such losses of life, health, efficiency, comfort, happiness and beauty as village after village in our countryside, through lack of forethought, has suffered during the last 100 years. Here we have the best authority for assuming that a premium in at least that measure will be forthcoming in the future development of the countryside. Introducing into the House of Commons in January 1947 the bill which was to become the Town and Country Planning Act of that year, Mr. Silkin said:

We have, in the past, neglected the planning of our villages, and allowed some of the most beautiful of them to be spoiled by wholly inappropriate development. Life in the countryside must be made more convenient and its attractiveness maintained. . . .

How will the local planning authority set about preparing the plan? The first step is the survey. . . I attach the greatest possible importance to this survey, which will present

a reliable and detailed analysis of the community from every aspect, and an estimate of its future growth and needs. Without this survey no plan can be of any real value. It will need the co-operative effort of economists, geographers, sociologists and other professions to secure that all the facts about the area are known, including the characteristics and wishes of the people. Here there is room for considerable scientific research and the fullest possible collaboration with the universities. . . . Next, the provisional plan will be exhibited and submitted to public opinion. . . . The people whose surroundings are being planned must be given every chance to take an active part in the planning process, particularly when the stage of detail is reached. . . .

That declaration, incidentally, whether consciously or unconsciously, was both an echo of, and a handsome compliment to, the formula which the pioneering Mr Stewart had worked out for Sutton a year or two earlier. It also contains interesting suggestions as to the quarters from which the necessary technical help might be enlisted.

It is reasonable to suppose that the planning authority for the district could at least assemble the preliminary data obtainable from printed or other existent sources. When *The Times* drew attention to the Sutton survey in a leading article last July, a Cambridgeshire man wrote to describe the admirable arrangements being made in his county for combined operations between its planning officials and its village communities. The Cambridgeshire County Council, evidently, has found no difficulty in contributing the help required. The Universities, as Mr Silkin suggested, and other centres of learning, might well contribute to the planning of many villages. A village provides just the raw material which both teachers and students in a variety of subjects need to give reality to their teaching and their studies. Village organizations, from the Women's Institutes to the Scouts, are well fitted to give local help. There is much miscellaneous published material, such as the admirable booklet, *Our Gardens*, lately issued by the Ministry of Health, to reinforce the planning team.

When Mr Stewart's book, *The Village Surveyed* (Edward Arnold), came out last summer, *The Times* in a leading article declared that the findings of himself and his colleagues "deserve the attention of all concerned with village life". No village should be deterred from accepting that advice through despair of summoning to a kindred task helpers as experienced and resources at least as generous as those which supported Mr Stewart's adventure in Kent.